User Generated Content – Your #1 Visibility Asset

UGC + SEO

UGC + Data Science

UGC + Apple Search

About Me

- Director, Global SEO Marketing at OpenTable
- Mixed E-Commerce and Hospitality background
- Brands: Starwood Hotels, Pottery Barn, Shutterfly

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About OpenTable

- OpenTable aims to power great dining experiences
- Founded in 1998
- Part of the Priceline Group
- 32K restaurants globally
- 16M seated diners/month
- 47% of bookings mobile

How important is UGC?

65% of consumers trust word-of-mouth on the Internet (UGC) more than content produced by advertisers

(MacKinnon, 2012, p. 5)

More than 8 in 10 say user-generated content from people they don't know influences what they buy and indicates brand quality

(Bazaarvoice, 2011, p4)

51% say user generated content is more important than the opinions of their friends and family, and far more trustworthy than website content

(Bazaarvoice, 2011, p4)

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Competitive Landscape – UGC Reviews

OpenTable	Competitors
Significant scale Rich Content Higher velocity Higher quality (verified) Not crawlable	Significant scale Rich content 100% crawlable

- <u>Opportunity</u>: index rich UGC reviews inline on restaurant pages
- <u>Goals</u>: connect with new diners, drive longtail and head SEO traffic

UGC Reviews – Our Solution

- Build our own server-side reviews database and service
- Crawlable reviews content inline on restaurant pages
- Schema markup, rel prev rel next pagination

★★★★★ Rich Table

FOOD 5
AMBIENCE 5
SERVICE 5

OpenTable Diner Since 2010 Dined a day ago

We enjoyed all aspects of our meal at Rich Table. The service was pleasant and informative. Excellent Cocktails..... The sardine chip bites are not to be missed. I had the scallops and they were the best I have ever had. Everything was prepared perfectly.

Tags: fit for foodies, neighborhood gem

★★★★★ New Favorite Restaurant

FOOD 5
AMBIENCE 5
SERVICE 5

OpenTable Diner Since 2015 Dined a day ago

Holy Moley.. Start to finish perfection. What an amazing concept to have a restaurant, serving food of this quality that isn't staffed with snobs. Every course was perfect. The service was perfect. The staff knew we had theater tickets later that evening and made sure every course (we ordered 7 dishes plus dessert) was served and the bill arrived with time to spare. Seriously, if you can manage to get a table... go.
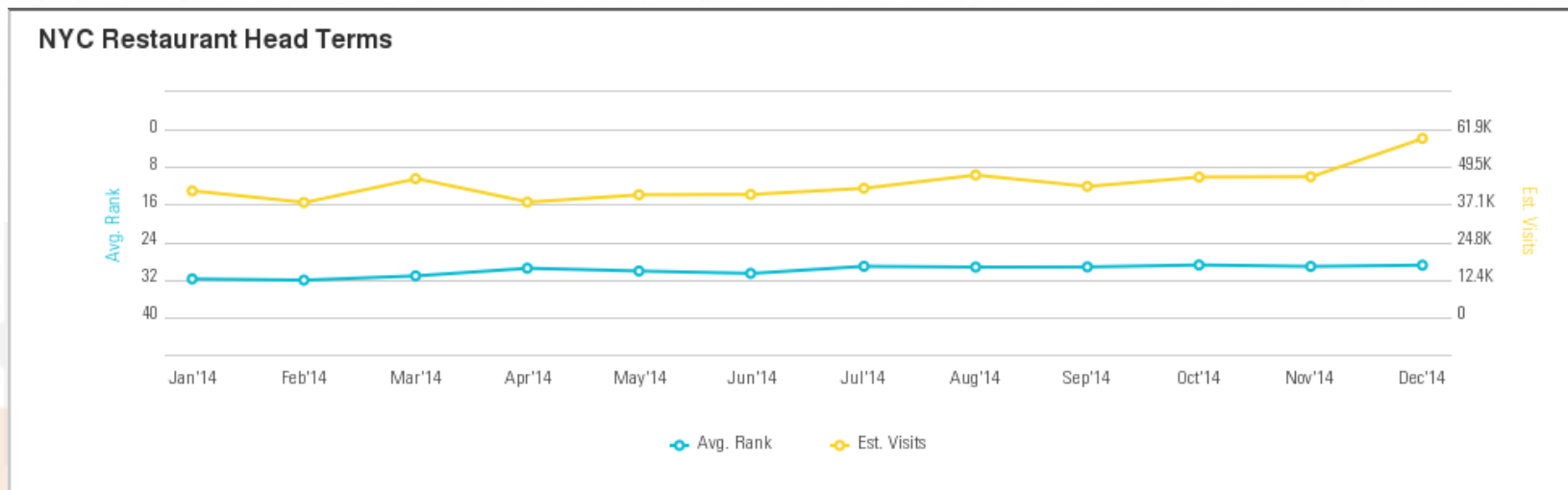
UGC Reviews – Results

- 25% increase in total SEO visits
- Connect with more new diners, engage with existing audience
- Capture longtail SEO traffic

UGC Reviews – Results

Increased visibility and traffic in key markets per rich content:

NYC Restaurant Head Terms

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Competing with UGC

- Where else should you use UGC? Everywhere!
- Review snippets on key landing pages
- Data Science - create light templatized content by mining reviews
- Improve CTRs via Schema markup and structured data
- Apple Search (iOS9) – UGC competitive advantage in new space

Gramercy Tavern Restaurant - New York, NY | OpenTable
www.opentable.com/gramercy-tavern ▾ OpenTable ▾
★★★★★ Rating: 4.8 - 4,694 reviews - Price range: $50 and over
Book now at Gramercy Tavern in New York, explore menu, see photos and read 427 reviews: "Service was unbelievable. I think we had 4 people completely ...

What a wonderful way to end the summer and start the fall season with... More
OpenTable Diner - 09/06/2015

Practical Takeaways

- SEO is marketing, marketing is connecting and competing
- UGC is a key competitive advantage for visibility and trust
- Consider the UGC you already have and positioning
- UGC has low cost and inherent scale
- Leverage everywhere you can before attempting to scale editorial

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References

➢ MacKinnon, Katherine, A., (2012). User Generated Content vs. Advertising: Do Consumers Trust the Word of Others Over Advertisers? *The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, Vol. 3, No. 1

➢ Bazaarvoice, (2011). Report: Talking to Strangers: Millennials Trust People over Brands, http://resources.bazaarvoice.com/rs/bazaarvoice/images/201202_Millennials_whitepaper.pdf

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